

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-13 (Canceled)

14. (New) A steering wheel having an airbag apparatus, wherein the steering wheel comprises:

a ring, which is grasped at the time of steering;

a boss, which is located at a center of the ring, wherein the airbag apparatus is located on an upper portion of the boss;

a spoke, which connects the ring and the boss;

an airbag, which is included in the airbag apparatus, wherein the airbag is folded such that it can expand when deployed;

a pad for covering the folded airbag, wherein the pad includes a door that is pushed and opened by the airbag when the airbag expands;

a switch operating portion, wherein the switch operation portion is moved to a non-interfering region by the door when the door opens, and, in the non-interfering region, the switch operation portion does not interfere with the door when the door is fully open.

15. (New) A steering wheel having an airbag apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the switch operating portion is pivoted to the non-interfering region when the switch operating portion is pushed by the door when the airbag expands.

16. (New) A steering wheel having an airbag apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the switch operating portion is lowered and moved to the non-interfering region when the switch operating portion is pushed and moved by the door.

17. (New) A steering wheel having an airbag apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the steering wheel has a forward inter-spoke space, and the switch operating portion is located in an inter-spoke space that is rearward of the forward space.

18. (New) A steering wheel having an airbag apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the switch operating portion is located in an inter-spoke space of a rear part of the steering wheel.

19. (New) A steering wheel having an airbag apparatus according to claim 14, wherein:
the steering wheel includes a support portion;
the switch operating portion is attached to the support portion by a screw, which is inserted through a mounting hole in the support portion;
the screw is fastened to a case of the switch operating portion;
the mounting hole has an elongated shape, which permits the switch operating portion to move with respect to the support portion; and

the fastening strength of the screw is predetermined such that the switch operating portion will not move downward by a force caused by normal operation of a switch on the switch operating portion but will move downward by a force caused by the opening of the door.

20. (New) A steering wheel having an airbag apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the steering wheel includes a support portion, and the switch operating portion comprises:

an upper case, on which a switch is located;

a lower case, and the upper case can move with respect to the lower case, such that the upper case is normally held in an upper operating position, and the upper case will move in a downward direction with respect to the support portion by a force caused by the opening of the door, but will not move downward by a force caused by normal operation of the switch on the upper case.